

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
BOARD OF EDUCATION
RICHMOND, VIRGINIA

WORK SESSION ON THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN: 2011-2016

MINUTES

November 17, 2010

The Board of Education and the Board of Career and Technical Education convened for a work session to discuss the Board of Education's *Comprehensive Plan: 2011-2016*. The meeting was held at the James Monroe State Office Building, Jefferson Conference Room, 22nd Floor, Richmond, with the following members present:

Mrs. Eleanor B. Saslaw, President
Dr. Ella P. Ward, Vice President
Mrs. Betsy D. Beamer
Dr. Billy K. Cannaday, Jr.
Mrs. Isis M. Castro

Mr. David M. Foster
Mr. David L. Johnson
Mr. K. Rob Krupicka
Dr. Virginia L. McLaughlin

Dr. Patricia I. Wright, Superintendent of
Public Instruction

Mrs. Saslaw called the meeting to order at 3:50 p.m.

Mrs. Saslaw opened the work session by stating that the purpose of the meeting was to discuss the Board of Education's Comprehensive Plan for the years 2011 through 2016. An initial draft of the plan was presented to the Board at its meeting on October 28, 2010, at which time the Board stated its intent to hold a work session to discuss in more detail the goals, strategies, and metrics that the final document should contain.

At the request of Mrs. Saslaw, Mrs. Anne Wescott, assistant superintendent for Policy and Communications, presented an outline of the proposed contents. Mrs. Wescott proceeded through the draft document and the following summary reflects the Board's discussion and the changes to the text as directed by the members of the Board of Education.

Discussion on the Proposed Statement of Goals

Goal 1: Expanded Opportunities to Learn: The Board noted that an extensive Standards of Quality (SOQ) review was completed last year, as well as modifications to the Standards of Accreditation (SOA). In addition, the Standards of Learning (SOL) have been made according to a pre-established schedule. The Board suggested that goal 1 be clarified and stated as two sentences. Mrs. Saslaw indicated that she would give the appropriate language to staff for inclusion into the final draft document.

Goal 2: Accountability for Student Learning: Dr. McLaughlin suggested that the text incorporate a reference to the new longitudinal data system, which provides improved ways for schools to report closing the achievement gap.

Goal 3: Nurturing Young Learners: Mr. Krupicka emphasized the Board's role in supporting and collaborating through partnerships to improve pre-K programs and services.

Goal 4: Strong Literacy and Mathematics Skills: Board members re-emphasized the importance of this goal.

Goal 5: Effective Work Force: The Board had a lengthy discussion of this goal, as proposed. Several members suggested that the language be simplified and clarified to make it more understandable to the public. The emphasis needs to be placed on highly qualified and effective teachers and staff for every classroom and every school. The Board discussed the impact of teacher shortage areas and hard-to-staff school systems, especially in light of new demographic data on the teacher/administrator work force in Virginia. The Board also acknowledged the importance of strong professional development. Dr. McLaughlin also noted the extensive partnerships currently underway and in development with the public schools and the higher education community across the state.

Goal 6: Sound policies for student success: The Board emphasized the importance of reflecting best practices for policies and their implementation.

Goal 7: Safe and Secure Schools: The Board suggested simplifying the statement, as proposed. Mrs. Beamer suggested changing the word "enhance" to "provide for."

Discussion of Future Challenges and Critical Issues to be Addressed

Mrs. Wescott led this discussion, as well. The draft text contains a section entitled "The Challenges Ahead." This section of the plan is intended to describe, in brief, a number of critical issues expected to impact the public schools during the next several years. The Board expressed its wishes to expand this section of the plan to include recognition of the critically important role of the Virginia Department of Education staff in supporting the Board of Education's work and priorities for action. The Board wants to acknowledge the potential for adverse impact of hard economic times on the staffing level and, hence, the department's capacity to assist struggling school divisions, as it has done in the past. Dr. McLaughlin suggested adding data to reflect demographic data for teachers and administrators, and Dr. Ward suggested adding a statement regarding recruitment and retention of minority teachers in the work force.

Review of the Standards of Quality

Dr. Wright noted that the Board will discuss this matter at the business session on November 18. Dr. Cannaday emphasized the importance of flexibility of any proposals going forward. Any proposals at this time must maintain the flexibility endorsed by the Board.

Proposals also must consider fiscal impact. Mr. Krupicka pointed out that not all requirements (or mandates) placed on our public schools come from the Board of Education. Requirements are placed on public schools by the General Assembly and by federal laws and regulations.

Following the discussion, Mrs. Wescott noted that the changes and additions requested by the Board will be incorporated into the draft of the *Comprehensive Plan: 2011-2016*. Mrs. Wescott also said that the plan document (as reviewed in October) has been widely distributed for public comment. The comment period closes on December 3, 2010, after which another draft of the plan will be presented to the Board for its final review.

Adjournment

Mrs. Saslaw thanked Mrs. Wescott for her assistance with the work session. She then called for further discussion. There being none, Mrs. Saslaw adjourned the work session at 5:15 p.m.